

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Aug. 22, 2005

For More Information Contact

VDH 08-14

Ken Crumpler, EMS Communications Coordinator (804) 864-7642

**VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH DESIGNATES FAIRFAX COUNTY
AND HARRISONBURG-ROCKINGHAM AS ACCREDITED 911CENTERS**

(RICHMOND, Va.)—The Virginia Department of Health Office of Emergency Medical Services (EMS) has recognized Fairfax County Department of Public Safety Communications and Harrisonburg-Rockingham Emergency Communications Center as accredited 911 centers.

“Accreditation is given to communication centers that use standardized emergency medical dispatch standards set by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration,” said State Health Commissioner Robert B. Stroube, M.D., M.P.H.

To receive this accreditation, a 911 center must have an approved emergency medical dispatch program that trains communications officers to provide emergency medical pre-arrival instructions to callers needing EMS response. “It is paramount that these professionals keep a calm, even demeanor when dealing with people who don’t always know exactly what emergency services they need. They just know they need help,” said Stroube.

The centers also update EMS responders on a patient’s condition while they are en route to the scene. The centers must maintain updated training and quality assurance programs to keep current on the latest advances in emergency medical dispatch.

State accreditation began in January 2005. There are 130 emergency communications centers in Virginia, of which 10 are accredited. The other accredited communications centers include:

- Chesterfield County
- City of Danville
- Gloucester County
- Page County
- Prince William County
- City of Richmond Ambulance Authority
- Roanoke County
- Tazewell County

###